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For discussion on 14 March 2016

Public Consultation on the Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan

PURPOSE

This paper informs Members of a three-month public consultation on the formulation of the first Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (BSAP) for Hong Kong, and invites Members' views on the BSAP.

BACKGROUND

2. Biodiversity is an integral part of everyday lives. It reflects the inter-connectedness of life and embraces the variety of genes, species and ecosystems that constitute life on earth. Benefits provided by biodiversity are crucial to our well-being and health. If we want our natural assets to be passed on to our future generations, we need to find solutions that will achieve sustainable development and conserve our biodiversity. Hong Kong has extraordinary biodiversity for a densely populated city. This richness is a valuable asset and the fruit of decades of conservation efforts.

3. The "Convention on Biological Diversity" is an international treaty aiming to conserve biodiversity, utilise its components sustainably, and ensure fair and equitable sharing of the benefits of biodiversity. The Convention was extended to Hong Kong in 2011. We aim to contribute to the achievement of global efforts and China's national BSAP according to the conditions and capabilities of Hong Kong. The Government is formulating the first city level BSAP for Hong Kong, with a view to stepping up conservation efforts and supporting sustainable development of Hong Kong. Since 2013, the Government has initiated various stakeholder engagements and conducted numerous public awareness programmes, including the first Hong Kong Biodiversity Festival involving 20 partner organisations, to take forward the development of the first BSAP for Hong Kong.

THE PROPOSAL

4. On 8 January 2016, the Government released a consultation document entitled “BSAP for Hong Kong” (copy at [Annex](#)). Taking into account local circumstances, views collected during the various stakeholder engagements and suggestions from Government bureaux/departments, we propose a vision and a mission, and outline the following four major action areas in the consultation document:

- i) Conservation: While Hong Kong's dedicated efforts over the years have yielded positive results, we will build on this foundation and continue to implement and enhance/add to existing conservation measures.
- ii) Mainstreaming: The Government has strengthened internal mainstreaming within the administration and is incorporating biodiversity considerations into its plans, projects and programmes according to the particular situation in Hong Kong and will continue to do so.
- iii) Knowledge: To increase understanding of biodiversity, the Government will conduct surveys and studies, consolidate data, and encourage organisations to launch research to fill knowledge gaps identified.
- iv) Community involvement: To raise public awareness and understanding of biodiversity conservation, which is an important area of focus of the first BSAP for Hong Kong, the Government will engage partners in promoting public awareness, and build support and collaboration with various sectors such as the agricultural, fisheries, business and professional sectors as well as relevant non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

5. The major areas of action proposed represent the key directions for enhancing biodiversity conservation and supporting sustainable development in Hong Kong in the next five years. Specific actions under each area of action will be developed taking account of views and feedbacks collected from the public consultation and the circumstances of Hong Kong.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

6. The three-month public consultation exercise started on 8 January 2016. The consultation document as well as other relevant information can be downloaded from the BSAP website (www.afcd.gov.hk/bsap). The Government will consult relevant government advisory committees and various stakeholders, including district councils, academics, environmental groups, professional bodies, commercial sectors, rural communities, agricultural and fisheries organisations, etc. Open forums will also be held for the general public. All views received will be carefully considered before finalising the BSAP for implementation in the coming years.

ADVICE SOUGHT

7. Members are invited to provide their views on the proposals set out in the consultation document on “BSAP for Hong Kong”.

**Environment Bureau
Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department
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